

Bends on her arm to kiss the sparkling bowl,
And looking from beneath her half withdrawn
Light damask veil, in many mingling hues

Of youth and beauty, smiles on rapturous eyes,—
So feel I in this glimmering light of dawn,
When night and morning in the twinkling dews

Of twilight, fill with wonder all the skies,
And sun and moon and stars their light diffuse
In one embrace of joy without a tear,

And life is born in love that never dies:
Am I awake with thrilling eye and ear,
Or dreaming in the valley of Kashmere!

✓
THE

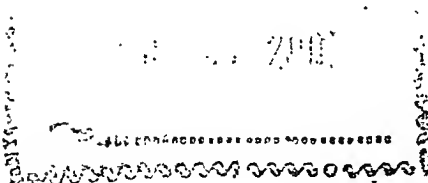
GARDEN OF THE EAST

THE GARDEN OF THE EAST

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Other Poems; Asoka and Other Poems;
Etc.*



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PREFACE

I READ the great Persian poets some year ago, and the joy I felt is expressed in the present volume. The poems, associated with the names of different poets, are not translations or renderings; they are rather intended to re-create the spirit and idea of each master of song in a new form, with just enough of the original atmosphere to be reminiscent. From the ringing, racy verse of Firdausi to the echoes of Urfi or the plaintive notes of Zeb-un-Nissa, the range is a wide one, including the dreamy, philosophical quatrains of Omar Khayyam, the measured panegyrics of Anwari and Khaqani, the romantic tales of Nizami and Jami, the bird-songs of Attar, the practical wisdom of Sa'di, the mystic musings of Rumi, the silver notes of Khosrou, and the anguished ecstasy of Hafiz, the greatest lyrist of all.

Persian poetry, like all great verse, embodies the passion of the heart and the longing of the soul in the quest of the Ideal in Nature, Man, and God. In the imagery of the rose and the nightingale, the mole, the ringlet and the down, the wine, Cup-bearer, and the bowl, it seeks both to disguise and dwell upon the innate thirst of the soul of Love for the heart of Beauty, to be quenched only in the vision of Truth. And so the human is linked with the divine, and Man beholds himself transfigured and renewed in the bosom of God.

AN OFFERING

THE dreams and deeds and visions of delight,
The fervid longings of the mind and heart,
Love eager Beauty's blushing veil to part,
And gaze upon the wonder of its sight!—

Love, mystic lord of Persia's soul of song,
Love, sovereign of each heart, and ear, and eye!—
The slave but sighs to sing and dream and die;
The master weeps, and bids his tale prolong.

Each word is but an image of the wind
That plays upon the waters of the soul;
And from each ripple hues of heart unroll,
Transforming and transformed, yet unconfined.

Behold an humble offering of desire
To catch a note, to kiss an ancient lyre!

THE GARDEN OF THE EAST

FIRDAUSI

THE STORY OF THE KINGS

THE Story of the Kings! What wondrous lore
Of high adventure, beauty and romance,
And purple pomp and glory, and a store
Of great achievement by the sea and shore
Of Persia, China, mighty Hindustan's!
Immortal heart that visioned with a glance
The pageantry of kingdoms in the East;
And in thy words of gold the sway increased
Of Life o'er Time and Fate and Death's mis-
chance!

But if the King his royal word forswore,
Nor understood the glory of his gold—
He sought to change to silver in his greed—
What need to sigh? Nine hundred years are o'er,
Yet Mahmood's tale in scorn and shame is told,
And thine's a name immortal, not an earthly
meed.

How many kings and heroes at a word
Have sprung to life ! How many are
consigned
To dark oblivion by no echo stirred !
How many hearts thy thrilling voice have heard
And leaped to noble deeds with dauntless mind !
How many a gentle soul hath sought to find,
Listening to the deep passion of thy strain—
Eager to catch a murmur or refrain—
The secret of thy magic undivined !
Thou makest all, the sovereign and the slave,
Linking the Past by golden chains of thought
To Future's grateful memory, ever green :
Each word a power to comfort and to save ;
Each image with a Poet's frenzy wrought,
And in each deed a heart, heroic and serene.

Behold Jamshed who perished in his pride ;
And mad Zuhag with his blood-thirsty snakes ;
And pale Faridoon who in sorrow eyed
His bleeding sons at war and groaned and died ;
And Zal discovered in the mountain brakes
By Saum, his father, where the snowy flakes
Whiten the sun in Ilburz. Then was born
Rustom whose deeds thy pictured page adorn,

By land and sea and rivers, rocks and lakes.
He slew the lion, elephant and bear,
The Dragon and the demon, red and white,
And witch and goblin's magic charms dispelled ;
And waged unceasing war with those who were
His country's foes, and with unequalled might
Afrasiab, Asfandyar, and lord of China quelled.

And yet, alas, self-centred in his fame,
His mind deluded by a mocking Fate,
He fought, unknown, against his son who came
To seek his father in a stranger's name.
They met, and twice he spared him. Mad with hate
Was Rustom at this shame, and would not wait,
And plunged his dagger through the bended side
Of fair Sohrab, his son, by him denied;
Then wept and groaned beside him, but too late.
And when Tahmina heard the fateful news—
Her darling boy by his own father slain—
Her mother's heart was broken and she died.
And Rustom too was by a treacherous ruse
Of his own brother, parted from his train,
And no one saw again the hero in his pride.

And then his tale, spared by the tongues of fire,
To show how true his virgin heart had been,
Prince Sawash, charged by her whose fierce desire
Was changed from lawless love to frenzied ire,
Young Sodabah, his father's favourite queen.

And then behold that golden-lipped Shireen,
Beloved of royal Khosrau, called Parveez ;
She kissed him on the coffin, and did seize
The draught of death, beside him on the green
Low bed of earth to lie for evermore.

And Kai Khosrau who owned the living glass,
And saw the secret of the sevenfold world,
And disappeared from life's unhappy shore ;
And Kai Ka'oos whose glorious banner was
In peace and war o'er many a mighty realm
unfurled.

Sikander, sovereign lord of west and east,
Who o'er the dying lips of Dara wept—
His royal foe, now lowlier than the least—
Forsaken by the band that shared his feast,
But fled his danger. There he sighed and slept!
And by his side alone in vigil kept
The great Sikander. Lord of Greece, Iran,
Invader of the snows of Hindustan,

And Afric's shore, what sorrow's dart hath crept
Into thy bosom? Hark! 'tis the call of Death.

And so he seeks the Fount of Life in vain,
And wanders darkly through the wooded hills
With hope and fear contending at each breath:
But God in mercy sealed this page of pain;
And Death is yet a balm that all our anguish stills.

And then the tale of Naushirvan the just,
Dear to each injured bosom from the shore
Of India to the Ægean. In the dust
Of ages many a name doth roll and rust
Of king and warrior, when their day is o'er,
But thine, O lord, will last for evermore,
For Mercy and Justice equally were thine.
In peace and war in purple glory shine
Thy deeds renowned in heart's unending lore;
Graced in the assemblies of the brave and wise—
The Poet, Statesman, and the ancient Sage,
The soldier and the pilgrim from afar.
And Christian, Jew, and Hindu in thine eyes
Were all alike, the same as did engage
In worship of thy faith, the Sun, the Moon, the
star.

Of these, Firdausi, and of many more,
Heroes and mighty princes dost thou sing—
Hooshang, Menucheher, Shapur, Bahram Gor,
Hamon, Peeran, and Goodarz. From the shore
Of Sun and Moon thy soul hath power to bring,
In all their starry splendour, on the wing
Of high imagination, to the heart,
Their long forgotten vision with thy art —
The pageantry and picture of each king.
And after thee did many more aspire,
And strike new echoes on the harp of Time,
In ecstasy of beauty, love, and wine:
But thine the vision of a sage's fire;
The morning music of a soul sublime;
And the first notes of joy, O Sire of Song, are
thine!

OMAR KHAYYAM

RUBAIYYAT

HARK, from the tavern comes each morn a cry,
"O Pilgrim of our threshold, draw more nigh;
Arise, and fill the goblet with new wine,
Before the measure of thy life be dry."

Wine is the balm of body and of soul;
The sweet revealer of the secret goal;
What care have I of this or other life,
When both the worlds are mine within the bowl.

Ah Lover, lose thyself in ruby wine,
Unmindful of the scorn that may be thine;
How many woes afflict the wise and sage;
But they that lose themselves have joy divine!

Lo, in this lonely tavern thou and I!
One glance, one glass, and one unwhispered sigh:
Careless of hope or fear, or joy or pain,
The bonds of wind or wave, or earth or sky.

8 THE GARDEN OF THE EAST

Drink deep, O heart, while aught of life remain;
The past is past, enjoy what is to gain;
The world will perish and the sky be still:
So fill the glass again, nor live in vain.

The bowl of wine, the Charmer, and the field:
Ah, this is paradise on earth revealed!

What need have I to think of Heaven or Hell,
When Earth and Heaven are in the glass concealed.

Spring and the rose, the stream, the bank of
flowers;
The Charmer's smile, and music's melting showers;
O bring the wine kissed by the light of morn:
This, this is Paradise of passing hours!

One glass of wine is richer than the throne
Of Ka'oos, or the realm of Toos to own;
One sigh of love at morning or midnight
Is deeper than the prayer of pious tone.

The Moon is shining in the azure sky;
The stars are gazing on the earth and sigh;
The tulip smiles, the white-veined jasmine weeps;
But in the glass behold the Charmer's eye.

Each secret hath its tale of mystery;
Each sigh its song, each wine its ecstasy;
List to the Nightingale, and see the rose;
And tell me, can the heart be ever free? .

O Life, 'tis writ that one day we must part:
Behind the veil who knows thee what thou art?
So drink and live in joy, for whence we came
Or where we go can no one tell, O heart.

Drink deep: it is thy kingdom of Mahmood;
List to the harp:—'tis music of Da'ood;
Think not of what is past or what may be;
Drink and be happy;—all is for thy good.

In Life's pavilion sits the sovereign soul,
Upheld by Time on many a gilded pole.
But soon the hand of Death will strike it down,
And in the dust its silken curtains roll.

The waters weep, the wind again is sighing—
"Ah, one more day of life is slowly dying!"
It is not life when I am far from thee;
Let be,—for all will die, and cease this crying.

Behold, in this old Caravansarai,
Where Night and Day embrace each other's eye,
A hundred Jamsheds held their feast and passed;
A hundred Naushirvans in slumber lie.

And in this dome where Bahram held his sway,
The deer and lion take their ease today;
And he who chased the wild ass to the dust,
Is dust himself where once the creature lay.

Ah, let the thorn be mine if not the rose;
If light's denied, renew the fire that glows;
If I am not a Muslim, let me be
A heathen heedless of the Muslim's woes.

Tomorrow's hope is all in vain today;
Tomorrow's grief is tears and death's decay;
Waste not the passing hour if thou art wise,
For none for future years a price will pay.

She for whose love my soul doth weep and sigh,
Longs for the gaze of some one else's eye.

What hope is there this bleeding sore to heal,
When the Physician sick at home doth lie?

"Drink and be happy,"— is my sovereign creed,
From both unfaith and faith's dull bondage freed.

"What dower is thine?" from world's new Bride

I asked;

"Thy happy heart," she said, "is all I need."

Wine is the fire of youth, its light, its dream;
So drink and smile in joy of life supreme:

It is the time of Spring and blushing rose,
And moonlight music, Love's unending theme.

Ah, who can tear the bosom's secret veil?
And who may know what griefs the soul assail?

No resting place save in the dust is there;
And there's no end, alas! to this sad tale.

Ah, not a soul is happy on this earth;
What reck the stars of sorrow or our mirth!

The sky rolls on, unheedful of our doom;
And 'tis our lot to suffer from our birth!

What if my heart is black with sin and shame?
My hope is as the quenchless temple-flame.

Embalm my soul with wine and Charmer's tears
And Heaven and Hell to me will be the same.

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Ah, wherefore pine for joy or earthly prize?
And tell me, is there aught that never dies?

A little breath is lent to thee awhile;
Discharge thy debt and load it not with sighs.

And good or ill, thy deeds are not thy own:
To Fate, not Man is praise or blame alone.

So be content and live in joy and ease;
The truth of good or ill's to thee unknown.

Then wherefore grieve for sinner's life or soul?
What canst thou gain or lose by self-control?

The sinless one receives no heavenly grace,—
The grace that makes the sinner's bosom whole.

I love to sin,— to seek thy boundless grace;
My heart is dark,—O light it with thy face.

'Tis but a meed if Heaven be won by prayer:
O give to sinners too a lowly place.

Nothing but smoke out of this fire I see;
Nothing but madness brings this wine to me;

And yet if we are sober, they will drink,—
The faithful ones, proud of their piety.

Who know the eternal secret? They who drink.
Who know the worth of wine? Who sigh and sink.
Ah, who can tell the sorrow of my heart
But he who with me dies on Beauty's brink.

The Sun has flung the noose of morn on high,
And filled with wine the goblet of the sky;
Drink, for the Herald of the hours of dawn
Will breathe thy tale to all Eternity.

Kindle thy lamp of heart with love's new light;
Though quenched in grief, behold it shining bright.
Ask of the moth the glory of the flame,
For those that burn alone have seen its sight.

Thy lips and locks display the musk and rose,—
The anguish of the heart, its fond repose;
And when they smile or wave in starry air,
The Moon doth long to kiss and draw them close.

Music and wine! the Moon is shining bright;
The Charmer too is in the arms of night.
Raise from the dust this heart of fire, O love!
Give me the glass and fill it with delight.

The Caravan of Life is marching on;
But no one knows to where the Guide is gone;
Nor what the Path; and no one has returned
To tell us of the Land we tread upon.

Over the rose is drawn a golden veil;
And o'er my heart is wine's ethereal spell.
O sleep not now, for long is sleep to be;
And drink till sunlight says its last farewell.

I saw a Potter with his pots of clay;
And some were silent, some did smile and say,
Breathing their secret low into my ear,—
“Who is the Potter, who the pots today!”

O'er one his foot the careless Potter laid,—
“Tread softly on our bones,” it sighed and said;
“It is the dust of Jamshed and Ka'oos!
Ah! who will smile when thou art here displayed?”

Within the rolling lantern of the sky,
Where lamps of Sun and Moon are shining high,
We are but shadows pale beneath the light,
And weep and wonder, but we know not why.

Ah, who can tear the veil of Destiny!
The secret of the Lord no eye may see.

Yet many minds and many tongues debate,
And no one knows, nor can but two agree.

What matters if an year be thine or age?
From Book of Time will soon be torn thy page;
Be he a King or starving beggar, all
Low in the dust will lie alike, O Sage.

Thou art the Lord of living and the dead;
Thou hold'st the circling sky above us spread;
And if I sin, I am thy slave, O Lord;
My deeds are thine, the slave is by thee led.

Visioned at times, at times thou art concealed;
In Light and Life thy image is revealed.

Thou see'st thyself in glory of thy art;
And Thou thine eyes divine, thy flower, thy field.

The Cock is crowing in the dew of dawn,
Glistening in silver light upon the lawn:

Ah, dost thou know the meaning of its cry?—
"Awake, awake, one night of life is gone."

One night of life is gone and thou dost sleep;
Awake, O heart, and fill thy goblet deep.

List to the cry that echoes in thy soul,—
“Awake, awake, and laugh when others weep.”

ANWARI

THE SPRING

NIGHT and the Moon;
The fragrance of the rose, the spring's delight,
And music, wine, and arms of love, and light
Of silver stream, kissing the wave and wind,
In rapturous tune
With purple passion of the heart and mind!

Saqi, arise!

With ruby nectar fill the golden bowl,
And with thy honied lips entrance the soul,
And lightly tread upon the odorous grass;
And bend thine eyes,
And raise them half in scorn and half surprise,
As thou dost take and pass to me the glass.

The Nightingale

Has picked a moon-lit petal of the rose,
And held it in her beak and kissed it close,

And ceased to sing from her accustomed tree ;
The jasmine pale,
Narcissus, hyacinth and lily fail
To wake her from her dream of ecstasy.

But now the Breeze,
With musk and amber floating all around,
Doth fill the earth with many a kindling sound—
The pictured poesy of flower and leaf;
And smiles and sees
The Nightingale's unwonted reveries,
And steals her rose to give her heart relief.

The Cypress waves
Its shadow o'er the Moon-enamoured stream,
Where love and longing heave in rippling dream,
And pomegranate and orange blossoms fall ;
And lightly paves
The earth its bosom with the dew that laves
The myriad eyes of flowers, now waking all.

Behold, the earth
Has spread the carpet of my heart's desire;
The breeze doth wave its banners all on fire,
Kissing the canopy of star-gemmed sky.

It is the birth
Of Spring within a Paradise of mirth ;
And lo, the Pleiads smiling from on high !

The Queen of Night
In full-orbed glory shines amid the stars ;
And Jupiter and Mercury and Mars
Uphold the camphor-torchlight of her state;
And earth is bright
With rubies, pearls and corals, and delight
Of musk and ambergris, on her to wait.

Sweet is the scent
Where no perfumer calls to buy and sell ;
And sweet the picture where no painter's spell
Doth rob each colour of its native charm ;
And sweet content
Is in the meeting souls where more is meant
Than in the fond embrace of lip and arm.

List to the Flute ;
And kiss the Moon that in a dome of glass
Doth melt thy soul to music on the grass,
And drowse and dream of what may yet be
thine,—
The golden fruit

That hangs on Beauty's bough, the magic lute
Of Nightingale that thrills with notes divine.

Far from the East
The Zephyr with the breath of morning brings
The memory of the mountain snow that clings
To hyacinth and jasmine's maiden face;
And spreads the feast
Of tulip and the rose before the Priest
Of Sunlight in the amorous Dawn's embrace.

Drink till the morn.
The moon-light fades and stars now disappear;
And dewdrops hang upon the eye and ear
Of flower and leaf that wake from downy sleep;
And now is born
A newer light earth's bosom to adorn;
And wind and wave with newer laughter leap.

Yet in my heart
A secret sigh each moment doth arise,
Enraptured by the almond-shape of eyes,
And mole of beauty on the lips of love;
When all apart
Her rose doth cast its veil with amorous art,
And strike the Bulbul mad, its power to prove.

O, thou hast ta'en
My heart away, and here is now my soul !
Thou art my lord of life, my only goal ;
My star of Fate, my everlasting hope.
Ah, who can gain
A flower or fruit within this world of pain ?
But thou the treasure of the earth canst ope.

Behold, the Dawn
Hath kissed the stars and bade the Moon farewell;
And to the morning Breeze now longs to tell
The blushing story of the approaching Day.
Now on the lawn
Each bud and flower to hear her tale is drawn ;
And now the birds will rise to sing and play.

The sky's awake
With rainbow-tinted clouds that seek to vie
With emerald, gold, and lapis lazuli,
And pearl and ruby in the streaming light ;
And river, lake,
And earth and mountain top each colour take
Of varying motions of the morning bright.

Farewell, farewell!
'Tis sweet to wake when night is deep, and sigh ;

And drink and dream of love with rapturous eye,
When heart to heart and lips to lips reply.

Farewell, farewell!

The morning hath a different tale to tell ;
The night is mine, and sweet to dream and die!

KHAQANI

THE PROPHET OF GOD

I

BEHOLD this Boat
Upon the waters of the world afloat
In realms of endless Space ;
And when the winds of heaven
Fill its sails, the Boat is driven
Across the Ocean's face.

But where's the Helmsman? Hark, his voice
Is heard o'er wind and wave, and bids the world
rejoice.

'Tis he who guides
The Boat, and rides
So proudly o'er the stormy sea ;
And stills the billows' roar,
And leads us safe to shore ;
Hark, the Prophet's word is heard through all
Eternity.

II

We are but children in the art
Of life, and weak in mind and heart.

 The Parrot in the glass
Beholds its image in surprise,
And rolls its mocking, melting eyes,
 And questions all who pass
In language not its own, but heard
Of many a man and beast and bird:
But thine alone the answer that can tell
Whose image and whose voice, and who can lisp
so well.

III

What sun hath power thy glory
 To picture to its eyes?
What tongue hath power thy story
 To whisper in surprise?

The sway of Khizir o'er the ocean,
 And Moosa's fire is thine;
And Isa's breath in purest motion,
 With healing power divine.

The Moon did part in twain before thee,
 When thou didst ride the stars

To where the host of angels bore thee
 Upon their wingéd cars,
Before the threshold of Beatitude,—
The essence of the soul, the glory of all good.

IV

The earth is but a cage wherein the Peacock of
 Life

Lashes his star-eyed tail against the iron bars ;
And weeps when his heart grows faint at such a
 helpless strife,
As he looks at his bleeding feet and drooping
 fan-tail stars.

But the stars of Heaven repeat the rosary of thy
 name ;

And Fate and Fortune pale before thy living
 flame ;

And thou alone canst set the panting Peacock
 free ;

The bars are broken and the cage of earth is
 open:—See

The fiery-wingéd Bird is gazing on the sky ;
And thou his heart of hope, the radiance of his eye.

And like the Sun that sends on every side its
darts,

Surveys the light of Truth thy boundless grace
imparts.

The stars of earth are mingled with the stars above
And round thy banner all in wondrous glory move.

v

Behold the sacred shrine

Of Ka'ba and its power divine.

Hark to the Pilgrims' voice! and now again

They kneel in silence and their hearts restrain :

It is the feast of prayer

To feed the starving soul ;

Where Solomon is but an ant to share

Its heavenly ecstasy beyond compare,

And in the dust doth roll.

The waters of the Fount of Life

Flow in its sacred well ;

The morning breeze hath quenched the strife

Of earth with its amorous spell ;

The Tree of Paradise entwines

Its arms around this shore;

And many a star in rapture shines

Its precincts to adore ;

When gazing on this sacred pile
That Abraham built to God upon this sanded isle.

The Stone within the secret Shrine
Is black, but filled with light divine;
Absorbing in its centre all
The rays of Heaven on earth that fall ;
Like words in the Eternal Book that he did write,
Blessed with the Truth of God in all its living
light.

VI

And thou, O Prophet, art the living soul
Of Ka'ba and the guardian of our goal ;
The lord of Reason and the light of Truth.
Give me to soothe my troubled mind and heart,
And to my broken soul the balm impart
Of sovereign grace and thy unmeasured ruth.

From thee I seek not what the worldlings prize—
Honour, or wealth, or power that hourly dies,
But joy of heart that only thou canst give :—
The precious boon to hold thee always dear;
To feel the bliss that God to me is near,
And in the heart of Man for evermore doth live.

NIZAMI

FARHAD AND SHIREEN

I

“BREAK, O thou heart of stone! If sighs and tears
Have power to melt thee, break, O stony
heart!”—

He was a fiery Sculptor and could pierce
The wingéd soul of life in every part,
With the quick chisel of his magic art.
There on the mountain, where he stood alone,
Was carved an image from whose eyes did dart
The anguish of each forlorn bosom's moan;
And still he wept and sighed,—“O break this
heart of stone.”

II

And at each word he raised his axe of steel,
And at each stroke a mighty rock was hewn :
A Monarch's word was passed, beyond repeal,
That if across the mountain Besitoon,

Alone he carved a passage, for a boon,
Unrivalled he should claim the fair Shireen ;—
A Princess sweeter than the full faced Moon,
Rose-bloom, narcissus-eye, and cypress-mien,
Whom Khosrau sought himself to make his royal
Queen.

III

For Persia's monarch doted on his maid ;
And doubly dear and sweet to her was he ;
And yet they were alone and sighed and prayed ;
For Mariam lived—his royal consort she,—
And could not bear a rival's sovereignty.
And so they lived in longing, but apart,
'Yearning for love and union yet to be ;—
Fire in the brain and frenzy in the heart,
Where lingering hope and fear renewed each
anguished dart.

IV

And he was tall, majestic, proud to view,—
Each look the lightning of a dark deep eye,
Each word the rapture of a music new :
And she, the fragrance flowers of morn supply—
A dream of loveliness and ecstasy.

A fairy form:—What rose could be so fair,
Or jasmine sweet? A smile that made both sigh;
And lip, eye, ear, a brow moon-arched, and there
Love reigned in light:—They met but only to
despair.

V

Farhad had seen her too, and with a heart
Aflame with passion filled the air with sighs ;
Forgot the living impulse of his art ;
His daily duties and his earthly ties,—
Pining away with drooping, dreamy eyes.
To see's despair, and yet not to have seen,
O soul of Love, is death that never dies!
And so he lived, and to his cottage green
Did many come to hear him moan,—“Shireen,
Shireen!”

VI

And now the land was ringing with his tale :—
They smiled in scorn,—yet some there were
who sighed ;
And Khosrau heard and frowned; his men grew
pale,
And anger struggled with a monarch's pride.

“Go, bring that wretched Sculptor:—quick!”
he cried.

And forth they sped o’er valley, hill and plain,
And searched for him over the country wide ;
For now alone he lived, to hide his pain,
Within a forest cave, far from the haunts of men.

VII

At last they found him, seated all alone ;
His head low drooping on his bended knees,—
Beside a stream, upon a mossy stone ;
Still as his shadow, trembling with each breeze.
They saw and sighed: and wishing so to please
His wayward fancy, told him fair Shireen
Had bade them seek him so that she might ease
His anguished heart, for hers had aching been :
“I follow, I follow,” he cried, “to where she bids,
my Queen.”

VIII

And so he came, and Khosrau saw and smiled ;
“Ah, thou dost love Shireen?”—he laughed and
cried ;
“Thou art a Sculptor bold, hast oft beguiled
The heart of stone to yield with all its pride :

What would'st thou give to gain a beauteous
bride?"

Farhad with trembling lip and flashing eye,
Glancing in lightning at the king, replied,—
"My life,—my soul,—the circling earth and sky!"
And then his eye-lids drooped; he heaved a broken
sigh.

IX

The Monarch laughed again :—"What need have I
Of thy good life or soul?—and thou art free
To give away the circling earth and sky
To those who ask and call it charity.
But, Sculptor, if thy art yet favours thee,
And thou across the mountain Besitoon
Canst carve a passage all alone for me,
Shireen is thine, and 'tis a royal boon :
Love melteth stone, they say, but thine makes
night of noon."

X

The Sculptor trembled for a little space;—
Then answered, marking not the Monarch's
tone,—
" 'Tis life for life, and I can ask no grace ;
If love be love indeed, I go alone

To see if it can break the heart of stone."—
A dreamy dew-light filled his eager eyes,
Now raised towards the sky, now cast upon
The Monarch where he sat in mute surprise ;
And ere he spake was gone, with joy-transmuted
sighs.

XI

"Break, O thou heart of stone ! If sighs and tears
Have power to break thee, break, O stony
heart."—
And with each word his iron arm he rears,
And with each stroke flashes of lightning dart,
Cleaving the bosom of the rock apart.
And by his side is carved an image rare,
Wrought with the magic wonder of his art,—
Of fair Shireen; and as he eyes it there
A mightier rock his blow doth from its bosom
tear.

XII

Hope nerved his arm, and love his heart inspired;
And each day saw him nearer to his goal ;
And now the path, as Khosrau had required,
Was nearly made ; and as the morning stole
Over the amber east, with eager soul

Farhad beheld his task's approaching end ;

“Let night,” he cried, and hardly could control
His aching rapture, “ah, let night descend,
And love will crown my life and stars their odour
lend.

XIII

“Tonight,—and then O let me cease to be !

Tonight,—my dream, my vision of desire !
The Day and Dawn have not more tenderly
Kissed at the altar of the Morning's fire

Than doth my heart with eager warmth aspire
For twilight's saffron curtain.—Ah, Shireen,
The soul of love can lift the world entire,
And make a path from earth to heaven, unseen ;
And melt into one glory all that lies between.”

XIV

He fell to work again, and now his task

Was all but done. But hark ! and who is she,
Whose silver locks a blacker bosom mask,
Speaking to him and moaning piteously ?

“Farhad,” she cried, “Farhad,—and art thou he?
How changed, alas, from all that thou hast been !
I am thy aunt: Hast thou forgotten me?

Forget then all that thou hast heard or seen:
Alas for the end of life,—for thee and poor
Shireen!”

XV

“Shireen?” he cried, “and hast thou seen her too?

My sweet Shireen! One stroke, and she is mine.
Nay, be not wroth, good aunt; and know ’tis
true,—

The path is made: Tonight the Moon will shine
Upon our nuptial bed with light divine.”

She moaned and wept again,—“Alas,” she said,

“I saw her and she murmured,—‘Thine, O thine,
Farhad, for e’er,’—and sank upon her bed:

Nay, start not, boy;—alas! thy poor Shireen is
dead.”

XVI

“Shireen is dead,” he cried, “and do I live?

And is there light upon the earth and sky?”

“Alas”! she cried, “they take away who give;

And what can mortals do but weep and sigh,

And hope to meet again in realms on high!”

No more he said, but with a sudden leap

Fell headlong down the mountain side,—to die:

And the last stone, all loosened from the heap,
To make the path complete, slow after him did
creep.

XVII

And when Shireen heard of his cruel fate,
And how by a foul stratagem was he
Removed from Khosrau's path, she slept nor ate,
But came to where he lay, and tenderly,
Raising his gory head upon her knee,
Wept sad and silent; and with many a tear
She kissed his eyes; and then it seemed to be
As though he smiled; and in her trembling ear
An echo sobbed,—“Shireen, Shireen, is Death so
dear?”

LIELA AND MAJNUN

THEY played as little children in the field,
And on the golden sands that lay beyond;
And by the shady well that half concealed
Their lips and eyes, they wove their fancies
fond

In moon-beam tales of wonder and delight,
And sighed to part at the approach of night.

And as they grew in youth's impurpled years,
Their lingering tales were changed to languid
sighs,—

Dreams and the agony of hopes and fears;
And heaving hearts and dewy, downcast eyes;
And faces kindling into rosy musk
When they beheld each other in the dusk.

Yet brief their joy; for soon within the veil
Sweet Liela was confined and pined apart;
And now her eyes were flushed, her lips now pale,
And now at unknown echoes she would start;

And gaze out of her window at the moon,
And nightly moan, "Alas, how soon, how soon!"

She sighed awake, and in her voiceless dreams
Did weave new visions of her deep desire;
And saw again, in love's impurpled beams,
Her Majnun by the well, who did inquire
What grief had made her nightly sigh and
moan?—

And then she'd wake and find herself alone.

And sometimes she would fancy that he came
With gifts of camels, jewels, pearls and gold,
And princely pomp, his lovely bride to claim;
And all did wonder at his wealth untold:
But then her mother scorned his purple pride,
And so he went away and sadly died.

Aye, so he came with gifts of pearl and gold,
To claim her for his own affianced bride;
Her father frowned:—"If princes be so bold,
What peasant's home can e'er be safe?"
he cried.

Her mother wept, and Liela swooned with pain;
And Majnun went away, and sighed in vain.

He hid himself within a forest cave,
And drooped with anguished passion and
despair;
And sometimes he would roam and wildly rave,
And call to witness earth and sky and air:
And then in fevered frenzy of the soul
Sing of the pangs of love beyond control.

And so he lived in dream of pale desire,
The anguish and the ecstasy of pain;
His father's heart was red with glowing ire,
And yet he knew not how his end to gain:
He threatened war, but only wrecked his cause,
For sacred were the ancient tribal laws.

And Liela in her youth's unhonied bloom,
Drooped on the throne of chill, unuttered woe;
Her mother guessed the secret of her gloom,
In quivering lip and bosom heaving low;
And told her lord, who heard with kindling eye;
And swore that ere that he should Liela die.

He gave her hand in marriage to a youth
Of his own tribe; and with a throbbing heart
Her mother kissed her dewy eye-lids smooth,
Decked her in silk, her musky hair did part,

And with sweet heima, wreaths of jasmine, rose,
And gold and pearl, her musky charms disclose.

But Liela moaned, and in her widowed heart

She felt the agony of her dead desire;

Yet bowed her head in silence, and each art

Of bridal rites but chilled her frozen fire.

And when the Bridegroom came to claim his own,

She did not weep or heave a stifled groan.

So Liela lived and Majnun,—far away

From sight of love, and with extinguished hope:

To night was changed their lingering light of day;

And wasted youth in blank despair did grope

For Death, to silence, in a desert tomb,

The cold, pale shadow of their morning bloom.

And so had died as strangers evermore

In mortal life. But in the heart of Spring,

When drowsy night in flowery fragrance bore

Its moon-beam cinctured glass, and whispering

Its tender tale into the South-wind's ear,

Did charm sweet dreams in lovelight to appear,—

She lingered once within her dewy bowers

Of blossoming palms; and low beside a well,

The linkéd memory of her maiden hours
Flashed to her soul in many a woven spell
Of Majnun's smiles, and honied lips, and dreams
Of love and hope in moonlight murmuring beams.

And then his image floated to her view,
In all the musky rapture of the Spring;
And then she sighed,—her bosom heaved anew,
And sinking low on Fancy's broken wing,
She gazed into the silent, silvered well,
And thought she saw her Majnun:—Ah, how pale!

And as she raised her head,—And who was he?—
She shuddered and was still: and then a smile
Broke on his lips;—he murmured,—“Can it be?
And art thou Liela?”—Trembling for awhile
She gazed on him;—then overcome with pain,
She fainted in his arms, and sighed again.

And when she woke, he still was by her side;
His lips were pale, his eyes were strangely
dewed;
And blanched his hair;—“How changed art thou,”
he cried,
“From youth to age, and in four winters rude!”

And then he laughed, and breaking into rhyme
Cried on the stars and cruel hand of Time.

And then he told her how he was alone,—
His father, mother both had passed away;
And that a wish had lately in him grown
To see her once ere in the grave he lay;
And so had wandered forth, and led by love,
Had strayed into her palmy pleasure grove.

And then she told him that her lord had died,—
And doubly widowed, she too was alone.
“Then is there hope?” he murmured, dreamy eyed;
“Nay, Majnun, nay,” she answered with a moan,
“Our hope is in the home beyond this earth,
Where mortal sorrow ends in happier birth.”

In tears they parted; and when summer bloom
Had ripened into fruit the loaded palms,
To light out of the earth’s surrounding gloom
They bore her slowly with their echoing
psalms;
And laid her gently by the moonlight well,
Where cypress grew and jasmine blossoms fell.

And when in autumn budding ears of corn
Glanced in the sun, and light the West-wind
blew,
Across the silver sands one cloudy morn
With mournful steps towards the spot they drew;
And laid him gently by the moonlight well,
Beside her, where the jasmine blossoms fell!

FARID-UD-DIN ATTAR

THE MYSTIC BIRD

THE night is ended and the morn
In light of heaven and earth is born;
The heart of Life awakes to see
The image of its mystery.

And hark, the birds on every bough
Are pouring forth their bosoms now,
Like children in their pure delight,
In language of the flower and light.
In hue and tone hath each a name,
And each pursues a different aim;
But all their notes unite in one, —
The glory of the morning Sun.

The day is bright, and now away
Through many a path of air they stray;
In forest, hill, or field, or plain,
By lake or stream to pick the grain,
Or twig or leaf to build their nest,
In wedded joy at home to rest.

And ere the twilight's glowing spell
Is quenched under the starry veil,
Their roving, ringing haunts they leave,
And in the downy arms of eve
Repose in hopes of new delight
In peaceful slumbers of the night.

But some there are that seek the light;
And scale the clouds, beyond the height
Of mountain snow, and wander far
In quest of their unvisioned star;
And some among them lead the hosts
To realms unknown and stranger coasts,
Where neither stream nor air is seen,
Or hill or lake or pasture green;—
But a white and boundless Sea,
And shores of dark Eternity.
And many perish on the way,
As voyaging by night and day,
They feel the pangs of hunger, cold,
And tremble they should ne'er behold
Their old companions of the trees,—
The haunts of many memories.

But there was One, so I had heard,—
An unknown and a nameless Bird,

Had seen the world from pole to pole,
And reached the garden of his goal;
But then had hid himself away
Beyond the eye of night or day,
And none could tell me where he lay.
But when the Day and Night in one
Were mingled and the moon and sun,
And stars and earth in one embrace
Smiled in the arms of Time and Space,
When smoke and fire, and wave and wind,
Met in one radiance undefined,—
'Twas said, the earth was strangely stirred,
To hear the echo of a Word :
And some had seen that wondrous Bird.

Revolving in my mind the theme,
I fell asleep, and in a dream
Beheld a star-inwoven field,
And many a bird was there revealed;—
The Parrot and the Nightingale,
The Peacock with his emerald tail;
The Phoenix, Eagle, and the Hawk,
The Swallow, Ring-dove, and the Cock;
And many more, a countless throng,
Of varied hue and wondrous song;

Above them, on a silver throne
The crested Lapwing's plumage shone,—
The Bird whom Solomon did bear
To guide him through the realms of air;
Now chosen by their voices free
Their leader in the flight to be.
Among the crowd, yet all alone,
And changed in form, but all unknown,
I sat and listened, and each word
Was like an echo I had heard.

They wished their sovereign Lord to choose;
But knew not who could wisely use
His powers unbounded to him given,
And lead them safe from earth to Heaven.
At last the Lapwing said, he knew
A wondrous Bird that lived on dew;
And dwelt within a secret cave,
Guarded by rock, and wind, and wave;
Whose eye was lightning, and whose breath
Kindled with fire of life and death.
And if they chose him for their king,
They all must seek him on the wing;
He knew the pathway to his nest,
And art to win in their request:

But the way was dark and drear,
And only those who did not fear
Should follow, for they would not hear
Or see a living sound or sight,
Except their broken breath aright.

They all agreed, and quickly flew
Above the earth, and then they drew
To realms of sunlight in the East;
And I, the lowliest and the least,
Followed behind them in the rear.
The day was bright, the sky was clear,
And glad our hearts, our wings as light,
And so we rose above the height
Of hills and mountains. Then the day
Became more warm, and as our way
Across a desert valley lay,
Some did faint and some did fall,
And many lingered to recall
The pleasant scenes they left behind.
And now 'twas mid-day, and the wind
In gusts of fire around us blew;
And dazzled and depressed we flew
With weary wing and faltering heart;
And many more did thence depart;

And when the evening shadows grew,
The crowd had vanished all from view,
And there were left a chosen few.
And now 'twas sunset, and the breeze
Came floating from the southern seas,
Laden with ambergris and musk,
And pictured perfume of the dusk.
Then the love-sick Nightingale
Began its rose-enamoured tale;
And sighed for moon-light bowers again,
To tell the story of its pain:
The Phoenix and the Falcon groaned;
The Ring-dove and the Parrot moaned;
And turning back away they flew,
And from the weary quest withdrew.
Then all at once our numbers fell,
And when the twilight raised its veil,
We bent our wings towards the north,
And of the hosts that sallied forth
But two were left beneath the sky,—
The Lapwing and, behind him, I.

Now from the chambers of the night
The dewy stars appeared to sight;
And still we flew, and from afar
The earth but seemed a twinkling star.

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And now 'twas midnight, and the Moon
In silver dew-light, none too soon,
Rested its brow upon the sky;
"Now," said the Lapwing, "canst thou spy
The mountains that above us lie?
Deep in their midst the wondrous Bird
Dwelleth alone, as thou hast heard.
Through many a valley we must pass,
And fly above this craggy mass;
And then descend to seek his cave,
Beside the home of wind and wave.
But fear not, follow me, and thou
Wilt see what none hath seen ere now."

The dawn was breaking in the east,
With double zeal our hopes increased;
Through many a valley did we pass,
And many a hill and mountain cross;
Nor rested in our lonely flight,
Till we had reached the star-kissed height;
Then suddenly we stooped awhile,
And sank upon an emerald isle,
Surrounded by an azure lake;
But not a ripple was awake
Upon its bosom calm and clear.

We lighted there and drew more near,
And sat together face to face:
I wondered in his eyes to trace
A mirrored likeness to my own;
And felt as if he had been known
To me for years; and as he spake
I seemed to hear my voice awake
An echo from another heart,—
Enthroned in mine, and yet apart.
“Behold,” he said, “the Mystic Bird!”
I partly felt and partly heard;
And in the bosom of the lake
I saw a ripple curl and break;
And then an image rise and take
A wondrous shape. Ah, did I see?
And who it was that gazed on me
With eyes of love’s immensity?
I hung upon his eager face,
And wondered in his eyes to trace
A mirrored likeness to my own;
And felt as if we had not known
The eternal secret of our birth,—
Divided on the shores of earth:
The Lapwing and the Bird and I
Were one in that Eternity;

And in the vision of the Soul
Beheld the garden of our goal.

And then I heard a Voice exclaim,—
“Behold the wonder of a name !
Apart, yet evermore the same.
Renounce thy hopes and wild desires,—
The smoke of all thy smouldering fires,—
The murmur of thy love and hate,
The sigh of sorrow, fear of Fate;
And pass through valley of despair;
And scale the heights of upper air;
And with a truer vision see
The sovereign Soul, the mystery
Of Life through all Eternity.”

I woke and saw the light of day;
And to my heart it seemed to say,—
“Behold the truth, pursue the goal;
This is the secret of thy soul!”

THE MOTH AND THE NIGHTINGALE

LEARN from the Moth, O Nightingale,
The secret of desire,—
The heart of Love's unending tale,
Consumed within the fire ;—
When melts the candle at the pale
Soft ashes in its pyre.

They know not what it is to love
Who sing and sigh and weep ;
For who can speak, when from above
The purple light doth sweep,
And in the trembling bosom move
In wondering rapture deep ?

The fragrance of each tangled tress,
The radiance of each eye,—
Where night and morning pause and press
Each moment as they fly,—

THE GARDEN OF THE EAST

The bosom's kindling tenderness
That melts with every sigh;—

The warmth of ruby lips that close
Before a word is spoken;
And cheeks that blush into a rose
Before a sigh is broken;
A heart that takes before it knows
A heart's unwhispered token;—

Who can relate their purple charm,
Their secret magic spell?
The joy, the anguish and alarm,
Within the bosom swell:
The lips are cold, the eyes are warm,—
And who is there to tell!

Learn from the Moth, O Nightingale,
The secret of desire;—
The heart of love's unuttered tale,
Consumed within the fire:
They do not know who weep and wail,
And struggle to aspire.

THE ODOURS OF OUR DEEDS

THE odours of our deeds illumine
The fountain of our birth;
A single light dispels the gloom,
And fills the halls of mirth;
So roses in their April bloom,
And sweeten all the earth.

Kindle the lamp when night is dark;
And lay thy grain in store ;
For though the sea hath pearls, the bark
Is safe beside the shore ;
And wise men in their wisdom mark
The kernel at the core.

The light of God on all doth shine;
The body and the soul
He made with art of love divine,—
A portion of his Whole:
And knowledge, beauty, strength are
His glory to extol. [thine

But wilt thou choose the wandering wind,
The shadow's flight, and leave
The essence that informs the mind,
And round thy vision weave
A cobweb of thy passions blind,
That darken and deceive ?

The road to Mecca is the way
That opens from the soul;
But many a path more bright and gay
Hath Tatar for its goal ;
But thine a Guide that will not stray,
And safe from pole to pole.

Behold, 'tis dawn: the light of morn
Hangs on each leaf and flower;
And beads of dew the eyes adorn
Of roses in each bower,—
Like Charmer's lips in smiles of scorn,
Enthroned in pride of power.

And hark, the birds in chorus sing,
And thrill the musky air ;
And at the gates of heaven they bring
Their gifts of song and prayer ;

Wilt thou alone be still, nor string
Thy lute of heart so fair ?

The sinner sins, but is forgiven
When he repenteth true ;
The Lord himself to grief is driven
One fallen soul to view ;
And with a smile that kindles Heaven
Doth give him welcome due.

The odours of our deeds illume
The fountain of our birth ;
A single light dispels the gloom,
And fills the halls of mirth ;
So roses in their April bloom,
And sweeten all the earth.

LOVE'S COMPLAINT

To whom should I complain ?
How little's left of life in all its prime !
The Past is past,—the Future's hope is vain ;
Today, between the two, is ours to gain ;
 But we have sold
 Our wealth untold,
To buy despair and death before its time.

Sikander sought the Fount of Life and failed ;
And who has seen the Tree of Paradise ?
What Karoon's gold or Pharoah's pride availed ?
And where are Azar's idols unassailed
 By Abraham's arm,
 With all their charm ?—
And where is he who sees but never sighs ?

Then live and love, and sing and drink and die ;
This story hath no end, this path no goal ;
Behold thou Liela's face with Majnun's eye ;
And ask Zuliekha where doth Yusif lie ;

And tell Shireen,
The imperious Queen,
Farhad can lift the earth from pole to pole.

Life is a Minstrel's tale, a glass of wine,—
A sound, a sigh, and an uncertain sleep;
Behold the flame, and like the moth resign
Thy heart to her who never will be thine;
And smile and dream
With joy supreme,
That thou hast given thy all, and others weep.

The home-sick Bird has learnt to love its cage;
A damask veil is drawn o'er Beauty's eyes;
And who can break the bars, or tear the page
Of Destiny unrolled from age to age?

Within the shell
The Pearl doth dwell;
And joy and sorrow mingle in surprise.

The Caravan of the Morn is marching now;
O gentle Camel-driver lead us slow;
To votaries of the mid-night stars allow
A little grace to make their promised vow,
Before the day
Should disarray
Their moon-beam rites of curtained rapture so.

Break thou the image to behold the Soul ;
Forget thyself to find thy wondrous prize ;
Behold the vision of thy viewless goal,—
The Pearl out of the caverned Ocean roll,—
And darkness bright
With life and light,
Impurpling earth and air and azure skies.

O DO NOT TURN AWAY

WHY dost thou turn away from me,—
Why dost thou turn away ?
The Moon on all shines equally ;
Then why, O'Moon-faced one, from me
Why dost thou turn away ?

Thou art the vision of my eyes ;—
Why dost thou turn away ?
Thou art my radiance in the skies,—
My sight on earth, my song, my sighs,—
Why dost thou turn away ?

If in thy sorrow I should die,—
When thou dost turn away,—
My soul to thine will call and cry,
And God himself will ask thee why
From me thou turned'st away.

Thou art my life, thou art my soul ;—
O do not turn away !

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The world is thine from pole to pole;
And this sad heart,—O make it whole,—
And do not turn away.

O do not turn away from me,
O do not turn away.
If I have sinned, thy slave to be,
Forgive me, save me, make me free,
But do not turn away.

JALAL-UD-DIN RUMI

THE MYSTERY OF LIFE

I

ETERNAL Time,

In happy union of the soul,
Have I been in the past, and now again,
Awhile apart, to taste of joy and pain,
And charms of life from pole to pole,
In earthly prime !

Eternal Space

I've left behind me in the stars,
And chosen in the heart to be confined ;—
With sky and earth, and fire and wave and
wind,
To lead awhile a bounded course
In lowlier place.

Low in the earth

I lived in realms of ore and stone;
And then I smiled in many-tinted flowers ;

Then roving with the wild and wandering hours,
O'er earth and air and ocean's zone,
In a new birth,

I dived and flew,
And crept and ran,
And all the secret of my essence drew
Within a form that brought them all to view,—
And lo, a Man !

And then my goal,
Beyond the clouds, beyond the sky,
In realms where none may change or die,—
In angel form ; and then away
Beyond the bounds of night and day,
And Life and Death, unseen or seen,
Where all that is hath ever been,—
As One and Whole.

II

He wished to see the sunlight of his face,
And world on world arose in Time and Space ;
And when He seeks to gaze within his soul,
Will they return to Him from pole to pole.

III

Drink of this wine :
It is the glass of love and life divine;
Drink of this wine.
And see within the mirror of its light
The hues of earth and sky and day and night;
And in the centre see
The new Bride with her musk-enraving eyes,
And mid-night tresses, ruby lips,
And henna coloured finger tips,
That beckons to thee with lowly whispered sighs,
So tenderly.

Drink of this wine :
It is the glass of love and life divine :
For ever this fountain flows,
And none its secret knows ;
It rocks the rivers as they sleep ,
And then they ripple to the deep;
And fill the wooded plains of earth
With sounds of life and music's mirth :
This ruby wine !

Quench all thy cares within this flood of light;
And leap, O Heart, into its waves to-night,
That crisp and curl;

The drop that roves on wings of clouds again
Sinks into rest within the voiceless main,
And see, the Pearl.

IV

His love hath given me birth ;
My heart to him I gave ;
The fruit that hangs upon the tree
Is of it born, and yet is free,
But loves upon the branch to be ;
So all I have
Upon this earth.

Behold the treasure
That lies unwitnessed in thy soul ;
The casket's old,
And will not hold
Even a portion of the whole
That no one knows to measure.

Then break the casket crude and coarse,
And set the treasure free ;
And see the light, and living source
Of life within its open doors,
That whispers, "Thou art He."

v

It is the time of union of the soul ;
And if thy heart's afraid, leave it behind ;
A hundred thousand murmurs of desire
Are silenced at this moment in the fire
Of love upon the threshold of the mind ;
Ah, dost thou tremble at thy visioned goal ?

'Tis light within and light without,
And I am treading on the starry air ;
This fragrance that the morning breeze doth bear
Is musk that waves from tresses of His love ;
The radiance of the mind is but the glow
That in the glory of His eye doth move,
Which none but those who lose themselves can
know ;
Whose boat is wrecked amid the white-lipped
waves,
And in the abyss behold the golden sands,
Rubies and pearls with which the ocean paves
The heart's unfathomed caverns. There revealed
They see the Spirit as their own, and yield
To him who stills the storm and breaks the bands
Of sin and sorrow, dread and doubt.

VI

Fire in the eye and glass of wine ;
 And fire is love, and see it shine
 Within the heart where thine and mine
 Melt in the blaze of joy divine!

Love-magnet draws the steel of life ;
 Its sun-light calms the bosom's strife;
 And when they meet in one embrace,
 One glory kindles in each face,
 And who can part them from their place,—
 And from her lord the wedded wife?

VII

Close lip and eye and ear, and kiss the glass
 Where fire and water in one glance unite ;
 Forget thyself and let the shadows pass;
 The mind is sorrow's mansion;—break its might.

Ah, what is love ?—the odour of desire:
 And what is life? the sigh of sorrow vain :
 And light is but the glow of heart on fire ;
 And earth and sky the picture of our pain.

But in His eye is light that cannot die,
 Enkindling world on world in starry flow ;
His Love is Truth of soul's immortal youth ;
 And life the fountain source of all we know.

All light is but the image of His eye ;
 Each image but the shadow of His Truth ;
The glass may break, and darken earth and
 sky,
But He will live for ever in His youth.

He sees Himself;—but thousand eyes of dream
 Play in the light and shadow of our heart ;
The Soul awakes, and vanish all that seem;—
 And Man and God unite, never to part.

One moment in the sweet embrace of Love,—
 And thou wilt rule o'er realms of earth and
 sky;
Behold the light that shines in Heaven above
 But as thy own, reflected from thine eye.

Who loves my life is but a secret foe ;
 And he who seeks my death is truly friend ;
The moon-light of my heart is waning low,—
 The lute is broken, let this story end.

70 THE GARDEN OF THE EAST

Hark to the cry that rises in the night;
And now a sweeter voice is calling thee;
Ah, didst thou hear the Messenger aright?
The Bridegroom calls; His smile will set thee
free.

Beyond the mind His love is undivined;
He claims his own and calls thee to thy goal;
His tender grace enkindles in thy face
The light of life eternal in the Soul.

He claims His own and calls thee to his throne,
And in thy image sees Himself again;
What fear hast thou? the seal is broken now,
And in one joy unite the parted twain.

I was when Time nor Space, nor name of place,
Nor aught of earth or sky was anywhere;
I gazed within and saw my image in
All life that is in sky or earth or air.

Now break the glass nor tell of life that was,
Or is to be; and lo, that light above!
And break thy lute; the heart that spake is mute:
The One was many,—all are One, and naught
will be but Love.

THE LIVING ESSENCE

CLOSE lip and eye and ear and close the heart,
And in the secret silence of the soul
Behold the living essence of each part,—
The atom in the universal whole.

Four elements from quarters four combine
To make the frame,—earth, water, fire, and
air;
And in the centre is the life divine,
The light of Him who made the world so fair.

Drawn in the mirror of thy heart behold
The image, and beneath the ethereal veil,
Surrounding earth and heaven and realms
untold,
The Light of life within the shadow pale.

An infinite sky, an infinite air and sea;
An infinite soul, an infinite life and love;
And in the bosom of this mystery
The little heart of Man doth live and move.

The lover sighs and dreams and hopes and dies,
But the Beloved lives for evermore;
The lover yearns with anguish deep and burns,
But the Beloved's happy as before.

Yet sweet is love, and sweet to be a prey,
Taste of the little grain of life, and lie
Entangled in its meshes on the way,—
Behold the Hunter, shed one tear, and die.

The garden glows with many a fruit and flower;
And light and shadow shed their star-lit dews
On branch and blossom, and each passing hour
Its song of woe the Nightingale renews;

It is the frenzied anguish of desire:
The little moth will rush into the flame,
And in its glowing ecstasy expire;
Its life is still;—the lamp is yet the same.

Ay, He that giveth, let him take away;
He is the self, and he the eternal soul;
He is the rose, the fragrance, and the clay;
The mirror, image, and the living whole.

He loves Himself, and seeks Himself in love;
When two are wedded into one, 'tis He;
The dead revive and call Him from above;
The living lose themselves in ecstasy.

The rain-drop's changed into the mighty sea,
Bearing with it the dust of many lands;
The seed is changed into the sheltering tree,
And flower and fruit are seen in many hands.

The rain-drop is the sea, the seed the tree;
The earth, the flower, the fragrance all are one;
Shadow and light, the morning and the night
Reflect the radiance of the changeless Sun.

But none may know of this unending theme
Save he who loses himself in the tale;
They sleep who wake, and they do wake who
dream;
The heart beats loud when all the accents fail.

The part's unconscious of wondrous whole;
The image of the substance, and a veil
Is drawn between the gateway and the goal;—
The light beneath the shadow seemeth pale.

Behold him thou with Majnun's melting eyes;
 Behold him in the chamber of thy heart;
 Light into light,— in silence and surprise,—
 Life into life,— and there behold thou art!

Sorrow and joy in endless labyrinth play
 Upon the field of life;—and now 'tis rose
 And now the thorn; now gloomy and now gay;—
 And all things change; nor reapeth he who
 sows.

But love can change the bitter into sweet,
 And still the rage of sorrow, fear and strife;
 And love can melt the stony hearts to meet;
 And heal the wounded, call the dead to life.

And love can change to Spring a winter old;
 And love can change a sovereign to a slave;
 To rose a thorn, and copper into gold;—
 Fire into light, and still the stormy wave.

But where is he who knows? The sage is blind;
 The ear that hears is deaf, the tongue is mute.
 And they who speak have never yet divined,
 Though quick to answer, eager to dispute.

They bless who burn, and those in chains are
free;

And those that give have known what is to
gain;

And they that die behold what is to be;

And they that do not love but live in vain.

The heart is drawn to heart;—the two in one

Perceive the secret of the Universe ;

The image sees itself; the light the Sun;

The veil is lifted and the clouds disperse.

Forget thyself to find the soul within;

For when the blossom's shed the fruit is near;

And they that lose today tomorrow win;

And Death is deathless life, without a fear.

We count the branches, fail to see the fruit;

List to the cackle of the cock and crow,

Nor hear the eternal music of the Flute

That plays within the heart in wondrous flow.

The lip, the eye, the ear are but the holes

Through which the music of the Master sweeps;

The Mind above the central frame controls

Each note along its pathway as it leaps.

List to the Flute and hark to what it says:—

It is the song of Love in life and death!

List to the Flute; unceasingly it plays,—

The eternal echo of His holy breath!

THOU AND I

ALAS, I know not whence or what am I;
I see around me earth and air and sky,
And wind and wave; yet hark, a trembling cry,—
What am I?

Who made me?—man or angel, night or morn?
Nor Jew nor Christian I, nor Muslim born;
And evermore I ask, like one forlorn,
What am I?

I know, I know, from whence I came and why;
The veil is torn that masked the ear and eye;
Behold and listen: earth and air and sky
Tell what am I.

Beyond the eyes of stars my home is bright;
In infinite Space, in everlasting light;
Where fire and ocean, earth and sky unite,—
There am I.

Nor mind nor body, smile nor frown of love
 Is there, nor life nor death; and far above
 Our hope and fear, the happy heart doth move:
 There am I.

I rent the mind's illusion from the face
 Of life, and saw thee sole in every place,—
 The one true Lord who tells me in his grace,—
 "Thou and I."

So Mansur saw and in that vision died;
 Drank of the wine and cast the glass aside;
 And heard the world re-echo far and wide,—
 "That am I."

One root and many branches, but the fruit
 Alike on all,—the seed from whence they shoot;
 So in the many murmurs of thy lute,—
 Thou and I.

Thou art the light of life that in the flame
 Of kindling worlds in many a hue's the same;
 And there behold, ere earth received a name,—
 Thou and I.

Thy foot is on the throne of azure skies;
And in the heart of Man thy loving eyes;
And with each motion sounds immortal rise,—
“Thou and I.”

Within, without, the wondrous end and source;
The goal of Life and Death's eternal course;
And there behold, on Love's unvisioned shores,
Thou and I.

Behold and listen,—ask not whence or why;
If this be madness, drink and dreaming die.
Ah, happy he who knows how eagerly
The world doth echo to the endless cry,—
“Thou and I.”

KHOSROU

SWEET AND FAIR

SWEET and fair, beyond compare,
Art thou on earth and sky and air;
And all the tongues in joy declare,—
Sweet and fair!

Sweeter than the rose art thou;
Fairer than a fairy's brow;
Dearer to the heart thy vow
Than all its pious prayer.

On earth and sky and ocean
I've gazed with deep devotion;
And watched the wondrous motion
Of Moon, so sad and fair;

And looked into the faces
Of men and maidens' graces,
And marked the soft embraces
Love and Beauty share;

But thine's a strange, mysterious light,—
The ecstasy of day and night,—
Where sun and moon conceal their sight,
 To spy thee unaware.

No Houri, angel, nor a soul
Of Adam's race, from pole to pole,
But yields to thee beyond control,
 To see thy charms so rare.

If I were thine and thou wert mine,
Thy soul within my heart would shine;
And both were then as one divine,—
 And who could part the pair?

Beholding me, alone, apart,
O, with what a rapturous art
Dost thou entice away the heart,
 And mind and soul ensnare!

Khosrou is poor and all forlorn,—
A stranger in thy kingdom born;—
O, smile on him this frozen morn,
 And bid him not despair.

A FAREWELL

AH, it rains,
And I must bid my love farewell!
Hills and plains
Have kindled into flowery green
Their bosomed joy, and now are seen
In bright array;
Yet on this day,
When there is none my grief to tell,
Alas, I bid my love farewell!

Can the heart's keen fire
Be quenched by tears and heaving sighs?
Or life's desire
By gazing on the starry skies?
The heart is hushed, and swollen eyes
Droop with each flower
At this lone hour,
When there is none my grief to tell,
And I must bid my love farewell.

Arise, O Moon,
And, O ye stars, with cruel gaze,
Behold, how soon
Love doth strangle ere it slays;
And all unheeding of its ways,
With mocking eye,
Doth laugh and sigh,
When there is none my grief to tell,
And bids me rise and say farewell.

It is the lot
Of lovers but to pine and die,
And murmur not;
See, there the bones of Majnun lie;
And there Farhad's, and ask not why;
Nor Liela sleeps;
And Shireen weeps;—
And there is none their grief to tell;
And they too had to say farewell.

Ah, happy Bird,
Behold these bonds though thou art free;
Thou hast not heard
The woes of him who calls for thee;

The night is dark, and tremblingly
The Nightingale's
Low murmur fails;
And there is none her grief to tell,
And she, alas, must say farewell.

The Tree of Life
Hath not a fruit to my desire,
But aching strife;
Deep in the heart I feed love's fire,
Unbounded by the world entire;
Its anguish feel,
My bosom seal;
For there is none my grief to tell;
And I, alas, must say farewell.

Upon the glass,
O Saki, press thy lips and eyes;
And to me pass
The cup that I may see my sighs
Mingle with thine in sweet surprise.
For in the bowl
Doth soul to soul
Its silent joy and sorrow tell,
Before they part and say farewell.

The floating musk
Doth tear the petals of the rose,
To deck the dusk
With light and fragrance where it goes;
With dying moths the lamp-light glows;
And heart and eye
But see and sigh;
And there is none their grief to tell;
And they, alas, must say farewell.

The Caravan
Is ready, and will soon depart,—
At early dawn;
But what will be thy fate, O heart,
Alone, forsaken as thou art?
Ah, let it go;
We wait below,
Where there is none our grief to tell,
And say our long and last farewell.

Farewell, farewell!
The end, alas, must come to all;
Farewell, farewell!
Though Spring return or winter fall,

The heart will never cease to call,
O Love, to thee,
So anxiously;
And when there's none its grief to tell,
In silence say its last farewell !

HAFIZ

AGAIN, ANEW

O SING thy soul entrancing song,
O Charmer of the golden tongue,
 Again, anew !
O fill the goblet with new wine,—
Heart-easing, mirthful, and divine,—
 Again, anew !

O lily-browed Cup-bearer, bring,
For I am mad, that wondrous thing,
 Again, anew;
O fill the bowl with ruby wine,—
Heart-easing, mirthful, and divine,—
 Again, anew !

O taste not life's unripened fruit,
Unless immortal be its root,
 And ever new;

Then drink the nectar of this wine,
In memory of its joy divine,
Again, anew.

The idol of my heart is here;
The secret bower of love is near,—
So fair and new;
O for a kiss on lip and eye
Of endless love and ecstasy,—
Again, anew !

The Charmer of the ravished soul
Hath stolen my heart beyond control,—
Again, anew;
Each moment with a sweeter grace,—
Odour and smile on dimpled face,—
So fair and new.

O morning breeze, O morning breeze,
List to the sighs that never cease,
And rise anew;
Fast to that Fairy's chamber go;
Tell her the tale of Hafiz' woe
Again, anew !

THE BELOVED

I'd give for the mole on the Beloved's face
Bokhara, ay, and Samarkand,—
If she give to my heart a little place,
And her own my life command.

Give me, O Charmer, that goblet of wine,—
The dregs from thy rose-hued hand;
The Paradise above hasn't the light of love
That lingers on this stream and land.

The passion and pleasure of life in its youth,—
A frenzy that few understand,—
Capture the heart with an unknown art,
Like a slave in his master's band.

How perfect her glory, how poor is my love,—
Like a blushing rose and a thorn;
Like the sun and the cloud, when the winds are
loud,
Like youth and age forlorn.

90 THE GARDEN OF THE EAST

The radiance of beauty in Yusif's face,
That grew each morn more bright,
Tore open the veil of Zuliekha frail,
Sighing for him day and night.

Sing of music and wine, and rapture divine,—
Speak not of the bondage of life;
No one may know its riddle of woe,—
Its anguish of joy and strife.

Speak harshly, O dear,—I love thee to hear,
More than the angels above;
How tender the theme of anger doth seem
When the lips are honied with love!

Sing, Hafiz, O sing so sweetly and string
A pearl on each wreath of thy lute;
The Heavens will gaze on thy song in amaze,
And the Pleiads in rapture be mute.

A VISION

I SLEPT and dreamt:—How wondrous was the
dream,

Transforming forty years of life to be
One moment, glancing in the fitful beam
Of Time's light shadow on Eternity!
And love, youth, beauty, and each fond desire
Were drawn into the tangles of a tress,
Where night and day in secret silence played;
And an ethereal music, full of fire
Of heart's unutterable loneliness,
The Nightingale did pour, unseen and overhead.

Music and minstrel!—wine and ecstasy!—

Fragrance and light,—the hyacinth and rose!
A cypress-form, and a Narcissus-eye,
And love and beauty, and a heart that knows!
And musky hair, a longing, languid gaze,
And ruby lips, so eager and apart,

And heaving bosom, kindling at each word!—

Is that a vision that the eye surveys,
Warm to the touch, by living passions stirred,
Or frenzied Fancy's thought-eluding art?

Sing thou, O Nightingale!—the pallid Moon
Doth languish for thy echo, and behold,
The rose upon its bed doth sigh and swoon.

Alas, will sweet love die and youth be old?
Bring, Saqi, bring thy soul-impurpled wine,—
Passion and pride and power in one deep
glass,—

That I may drink away this eager strife:
Fear not, O heart, we drink by law divine;
And if the sages frown, nor let us pass,
Receive from God the welcome of our life.

What says the harp and tell me, what the flute?

And what's the tune the aged Minstrel plays?
“List to the voice, and let the tongue be mute;—
List to the voice, list to the voice!”—he says.

Alas, we see and suffer, and in vain
The hungry beggar sighs to be a King,

And many thousand hearts are laid in dust;
The Pearl's a gift of Heaven; so pass again
The honied glass, bedewed with joy of spring;—
The memory of the Past, the Future's trust.

Life is a field with many a thorn and flower,
Where many Pigeons, many Parrots come;
And the lone Nightingale in secret bower
Bewails her lot, and makes my sorrow dumb.
But where's the Phoenix with the golden crown,
Sky-scaling wings, and kingdom-quelling eye,
Which having seen there is naught else to see?
And where the heart that gazes with a frown,
And yet doth melt to hear a frozen sigh?—
And where, alas, is there a place for me?

Ah, let the people hear, the sages chide;
They read the law, but know not what is love.
Their eyes are keen to question and divide,—
Our mystic rites of midnight to reprove.
Then sing of music, beauty, love, and wine,
The honied lips, and union yet to be,
And from the anguished heart its fear dispel:
Can Heaven itself the knot of Fate untwine?
Or puny mortals change its high decree?—
Then sing and sigh, and bid the world farewell.

Sikander's glass is like Jamshed's: Behold
 The realms of Dara broken, and be wise;
 And see there also drawn in fold on fold
 The image of my soul's unfathomed eyes!
 He never dies who lives by law of love,—
 The wondrous alchemy of youth that makes
 A Karoon of a beggar, prince a slave;
 So let us drink:—In Heaven they place above
 The pious Shiekh the heart that weeps and
 wakes,
 Whom no one knows, nor any cares to save.

The world's a ten days' miracle of grace,
 They say;—but do not think that it will last
 Even for that little lingering space;
 So live today, tomorrow all is past.
 The secret of my soul's immensity
 Is more profound than Hatim's boundless heart;
 And all the pearls the unfathomed Ocean bears
 Less than a single drop that tenderly
 Clings to my drowsy eye-lids, loth to part,
 Caught by the sighing zephyr unawares.

The world is called to great Solaiman's feast,
 And many a Dara, Ka'oos and Jamshed,

Attend in state, and many a bird and beast;
And many a luxury's before them laid.
But wilt thou also go, O heart of mine,
To see a moment's triumph and return,
Sad to the core and silent?—Where are they
That wore the crown and feasted? Music, wine,
And Minstrel, where are they? Yet do not
mourn;
The world's a three days' Caravansarai.

Kindle the lamp:—the breeze hath fanned the fire,
Now blowing from the garden where she lives.
Kindle the lamp: the rose of heart's desire
Is glowing in her garden, and she gives
Its fragrance to the winds to comfort thee.
Kindle the lamp: it now will soon be night,—
The star-lit page of love's unwhispered lore.
Awake and dream; let wine and music be;
And see but once the world-illuming light:
Kindle the lamp,—to quench it evermore!

JAMI

THE LORD OF LIFE

EACH moment in a newer form
Does he appear
And disappear ;
In light and shade, in calm and storm,
In joy and fear,
And far and near.

On earth and sky, in wave and wind,
In night and day,
And unconfined,
In whole and part, in heart and mind,
At rest and play
Of eye and ear.

He fills the glass with ruby wine,
And smiles to see
Its joy divine ;
And drinks away this heart of mine,
In ecstasy
Of smile and tear.

The trembling secret of my soul
Is now revealed
Beyond control;
But he can make my bosom whole,
To whom I yield
This heart of fear.

He is the glass, he is the wine,
He is the lips,
And joy divine;
And he is all of me and mine,—
His own he sips,
To hold me dear.

He is the mask of sky and earth,
Of dewy flowers
And star-light's birth;
The host, the guest, the joy and mirth
Of passing hours
In their career.

He is the music and the lute,
The singer's soul,
The listener mute;
And he the seed, the flower, the fruit,—
The guide, the goal,
The pathway clear.

The present, future, and the past,
Are his who is,
And who will last;
His lips of Love on life are cast,—
Her eyes to kiss,
Her brows to clear. .

He wished to be,—and so, behold!
The world arose
In fold on fold,—
In radiance brighter far than gold;—
He held it close
In sphere on sphere!

Each moment in a newer form
Does he appear
And re-appear;
In light and shade, in calm and storm,
In joy and fear,
And far and near.

YUSIF AND ZULIEKHA

PART FIRST

I

In the Garden of Love

ZULIEKHA TO YUSIF :—

DREAM of my dream !

I left for thy sake my home, and came to the
land of the Nile;

Nor cared for a hundred Princes that languished
for the boon of a smile;

But as thrice in my dream thou badest, I came to
seek thee here,—

A virgin bride though wedded to Egypt's fore-
most peer.

My night is spent in longing, the day in broken
sleep:

Ah, wilt thou deign to answer ?—See how I sigh
and weep !

Dream of my dream !

O, when thy jealous brothers did throw thee in
the well,

My love with airy lightness upon the waters fell;
And with the wings of lightning over the desert
flew,

And to thy side as quickly a thirsty Caravan
drew;

And with my waving ringlets did bring thee out
again ;

And with these eyes of anguish kissed away thy
pain.

They brought thee to the Market,—a slave of
wondrous prize;

Behind my silken curtains I saw thy starry eyes;
Thy moon-arch musky forehead, thy cheeks like
roses fair,

And lips more red than rubies, and sweet beyond
compare ;—

A thousand times more lovely than aught I saw
in dream

Thy living light, O Yusif, my lord of life supreme.

With a kingdom's gold I bought thee,—my heart
to thee I sold ;

A slave no more,—a master,—a sovereign uncon-
trolled ;

Who with a glance could conquer the treasure
of desire,

And melt the coldest bosom with all-consuming
fire.

In homage low and worship my soul to thee I
give :—

O smile upon thy maiden, and bid the suppliant
live.

Light of my life !

In dream to me thou camest, and stol'st away my
sleep ;

And drov'st me mad with anguish, with sighs and
sorrow deep ;

Thy heart is in my bosom,—thine eyes are in my
soul ;

Thou art my love, my beauty,—the guardian of
my goal ;

My hope of joy in Heaven, my fount of life on
earth ;

And thou art mine, O Yusuf, so destined from
thy birth.

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Alas, thy hand is frosty,—thy heart is slow
and chill;

And when I speak, thou frownest,—thy thrilling
voice is still;

Thine eyes, like pale Narcissus, are rooted to the
ground;

In them my night and morning in soft embrace
go round.

O, let me in the glory of thy morning lie;—

And on the fragrant bosom of night but dream
and die.

Is it a sin to love thee, though thou art cold and
stern?

'Tis God who made thee lovely, and made my
bosom burn.

Behold, how sad and silent the Nightingale's by
day,—

But when the night approaches, she sings her soul
away;

The moth into the flaming light doth yearn to
fly,—

Contented so to perish in all its ecstasy.

To Egypt's peer though wedded, O Yusif, I am
thine;
He is thy earthly master,—thou art my lord
divine;
What are the bonds of custom and freaks of
Fortune worth
To those whose souls are plighted by Fate before
their birth?
'Tis God made man and woman;—and Yusif,
thou art mine;—
Mine, O mine for ever,—and I am thine, O thine.

II

In the Bed-Chamber of Love

ZULIEKHA to YUSIF:—

Life of my life!
The earth is an altar of love,—
A dream of ecstasy above
The Paradise of Heaven;
O, lift but the curtain of sleep,
Through its tangled tresses peep,—
And the Mansion of seven
Musk-chambers will open at a word,—
By echo unwhispered, by the ear unheard.

Light of my light!

Yusif and Zuliekha, Yusif and Zuliekha, love!
 Yusif and Zuliekha, beneath and around and
 above!

How sweet, O Yusif, is the sound,
 When life and love go round
 In the dance of delight, enthroned in the bosom
 and crowned!

Dream of my dream!

I have sighed for thee night and day;
 I have longed with a love that threatens to
 betray

My eager soul,
 Beyond control,
 To the scorn of a world that triumphs in its
 power to slay.

In secret I saw thee,—
 In secret we meet;
 Ah, who can now chide us,—
 Detain us, divide us,—
 How tender,—how sweet!

Thou art locked in my bosom,—

Thou art linked to my life,—

Soul into soul—

My Heaven, my goal,—

Dearer than the husband to the wedded new wife.

O Yusif, with a glance,

O Yusif, with a kiss,—

Bid me to live,—

This freedom forgive,—

Thine, thine for ever,—all that was mine or is.

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PART SECOND

I

Alone

ZULIEKHA : —

So cruel and cold and stern !
More dry than Sahara sands.
O fly not, my Yusif,—return:—
Dost thou scorn the touch of my hands?

Gone, and in scorn and pride :
There is nothing now to hold or hide.—
Diamond cuts diamond apart;
Sternness sternness of heart.
Alone in a prison he pines,
Till he softens and meekly resigns
His heart to my frozen desire,
To die with my own in my ire.

In her Sick-Chamber

ZULIEKHA TO HER MAIDENS:—

Scorn not the heart that is burning
With the flames of quenchless desire,—
Ye maidens, who know not the yearning
Of a soul that is broken entire!

The moth doth tremble
At the altar of light;
When the stars assemble
In the silence of night;

The lone Nightingale
Is singing and sighing;
The Moon grows pale
With anguish undying:

Had they half of my sorrow
To sicken and sigh,
Their night into morrow
Will not change ere they die.

See my Yusif but once,—
 But the fringe of his eye,—
 And your husbands and sons
 You will seek to deny.

You will sell what you own,
 To buy your desire;
 In your bosom enthrone
 Your vision of fire.

The strength in my heart is fading and falling;
 My lips have no power their anguish to tell;
 "Yusif and Zuliekha, Yusif and Zuliekha"—calling,
 Let me die as I dream of a last farewell!

III

Alone

ZULIEKHA:—

He is dead whom I took to my lord,
 Led by the light of a dream;
 God in his mercy reward
 His heart of goodness supreme.

He left me to my maiden desires,—
A virgin,—though wedded, a wife;
God's peace on his soul and his sires,—
In Heaven an eternal life.

He has left me his wealth untold,—
The dower of a mighty queen;
His coffers of pearl and gold,
And rubies and emeralds green.

But what were this all unto me,
Or the kingdom of earth and Heaven?—
He is gone I am longing to see!
And am I, alas! forgiven?

O Yusif, O where art thou?—
And dost thou remember me?—
Freed from his prison, and now
They tell me that a Prince is he.

Nothing but the light of his eyes
In my visions and dreams I saw;
Nothing but tears and sighs
Fell to my lot by his law.

110 THE GARDEN OF THE EAST

Let minstrels and pilgrims relate
But the tales of my Yusif to me;—
I will drink of them early and late,
And give them my gold for a fee.

Let echo on the wings of the breeze
But murmur the music of his name,—
And I'll follow over sands and seas,
Nor care for their scorn or my shame.

Let my eyes his image but trace,
And with tears I'll close them for ever;—
Blinded with the light of his face,—
Part with it never, O never.

Then sightless, and poor, and old,
He may gaze in pity on me!
Then let these ashes be cold,—
In the dust of his feet to be!

PART THIRD

I

In the Dust

YUSIF to ZULIEKHA :—

ART thou Zuliekha, sightless, poor, and old?—
Reduced to this, and all, alas, for me!
I could not in thy wrinkled face behold
The blushing light that shone so tenderly

When thou in Egypt wert without a peer,
In maiden charm and loveliness of youth:
And I the cause?—Alas, how many a tear
Hath made its bleeding pathway down the
smooth

And smiling radiance of thy cheek and eye,
And stilled the glory of thy heavenly light!
Thou dost not speak, Zuliekha, and a sigh
Yet lingers on thy lips in cold affright!

O speak again, and let the woeful past
Be buried in the deep abyss of Time;
Love kindles life, and youth returns as fast,
And beauty smiles in wreaths of rosy prime.

I could not grant what was not mine to give,
When linked to another by a sacred law,
Thou bad'st me in thy melting moon-light live,—
And secret veil o'er Love's pure light to draw.

But now, Zuliekha, thou and I are free ;
And in the wedded joy of heart's desire,
O let me kiss thy trembling tear, and be
Thy own again, and make thee mine entire.

Wilt thou not speak, Zuliekha?—O, that sigh
That sank into my soul!—O, let me hear
Thy tale again, and with an aching eye
Weep for the anguish that I caused thee, dear!

For I have loved thee with an eager heart,—
But dared not whisper what I longed to tell,—
Lest in the silence of my soul, apart,
My trembling thoughts betray the secret swell.

More than an angel thou to me wert fair;
And I a humble votary at thy shrine,
Beheld thy glory, and trembled in despair,—
In silence,—for I could not call it mine.

But now, Zuliekha, thou art mine, and I,—
Behold, I fall in worship at thy feet!
The Lord has heard the anguish of my cry,—
And thou art once again as fair and sweet

As in the spring-time of thy happy days;—
Nay, sweeter, fairer yet, if that could be.
Look on me, love, and with one whisper raise
A lonely heart, and make it one with thee.

Heart of my heart,— and mine for ever, love!
Light of my light, and mirror of my soul!
“Yusif and Zuliekha,”—hark, the sky above
Thrills to the sound, the earth from pole to
pole.

“Yusif and Zuliekha, Yusif and Zuliekha,” love,
“Yusif and Zuliekha,” everywhere I hear;
The unkissed fragrance in the secret grove
Of longing soul doth call to thee, O dear.

As light to fire, Zuliekha, be thou mine;
 As youth to beauty, music to the lyre;—
 As bridal eve to Love, as warmth to wine,
 As union to the heart,—be mine entire.

II

Together

ZULIEKHA to YUSIF:--

A dream, a dream, O Yusif,—let it be!
 A dream, a dream, inwoven with sighs and tears!
 A drop, a dew,—on earth, or sky, or sea,
 It melts away when day-light re-appears.
 A dream, a dream, O Yusif,—let it be.

The loveliness of form and fragrant bloom
 Of longing youth and languishing desire,
 And love and beauty in the star-lit gloom
 Of their own breath, veiled from the world
 entire,—
 A dream, a dream, O Yusif,—let it be.

I sighed for thee, and thou didst turn away;
 I see thee weep:—Alas, my heart is still.
 O, how I longed to see thee; but today
 A stranger echo doth my bosom fill,—
 “A dream, a dream, Zuliekha,—let it be.”

But such as I am, Yusif, I am thine;—

The mind is old, but ever young the heart.

God shapes through human love his ends divine,

And thou and I are his till life depart;

And in that dream, O Yusif, let us be!

KASHMERE

AH, is this earth, or else the happy vale
 Of visioned Paradise,—the Poet's dream
 Of love-enchanted music, and the tale

Of life and joy immortal?—Is this stream
 Of silver light, that trembles as we sail
 Along a bank of musk-inhaling flowers,—

Jehlam, or Sindhu, or the Moon-kissed gleam
 Of waving milk, that flows through languorous
 bowers
 Of sweet-lipped youth and beauty, where the
 breeze

Is filled with angels' music at all hours?
 And are these flowers, on which in rapture gaze
 Our odour-stricken eyes?—and roses these

That half in pride and half in passion raise,
 Like eager Houris, coy and hard to please,
 Their ruby lips and bosoms?—Jasmines small,

That faint with fragrance of the lily's praise ;
And lotus, hyacinth, narcissus tall,—
That bends to see its beauty in the lake,—

And many more, in white and purple,—all,—
Can they be gems of earth, or stars awake
In all their glory in a newer Heaven,—

Revealed to Man, his woeful life to make
More happy than on earth to him is given ?—
Where emerald hills and rainbow-pictured skies,

In ever-changing hues of morn and even,
And roving clouds, and odour-bearing air,
And azure-tinted snowy splendours rise ;

And flowers and fruits of sweetness undivined,
By lake and stream and grove, in wondrous
guise,
And wealth of musk and honey, charm the soul

To music of the sky and wave and wind,—
Entrancing mind and heart beyond control!
And as a Bride that on the rose-lipped lawn

ZEB-UN-NISSA

LOVE, SWEET LOVE

Love, sweet love, that kindles with its fire,
Within my heart, the hope of fond desire;
Love, sweet love, within whose moon-light
beams

The Rose of Nightingale in rapture dreams;—
Love, sweet love, my heart is given to thee.

The morning longeth for thy soft delight;
And languisheth for the approach of night;
And for the moth the flame in eager gaze
And kindling lips, doth its blue eyelids raise;—
For love, sweet love, their heart is given to
thee.

But for my soul what hast thou, love, in store?
Ah! with each sigh my bosom heaves for more.
But what care I for women's eyes of scorn,
When to thy doom my day of life was born?—
For love, sweet love, my heart is given to
thee.

The Nightingale has learnt the art of love
From my desire; the moon-light from above
Kisses the waters with my dewy eyes;
And with my hope the moth in glory dies;—
For love, sweet love, my heart is given to thee.

The field of life, from youth's awaking years,
Is watered with the heart's unending tears;
And lo! the fruit is hanging on each tree,—
My hope, my fear, my grief, my ecstasy!—
For love, sweet love, my heart is given to thee.

The gardener's joy is in the budding thorn,
To crown his life with roses on each morn;
And when the heart is panting with desire,
It dreams of comfort in a flood of fire;—
For love, sweet love, its soul is given to thee.

The fledgling of my heart is nestling where
The hyacinth blossoms in the dewy air;
And morning is a captive in the chains,
Where half-clad rose its musky goblet drains;—
For love, sweet love, my heart is given to thee.

It partook of a little grain of love,
And in the snare the Hunter from above
Had cast upon the earth, entrapped it lay;
And wept and laughed in wonder all the day;
For love, sweet love, the heart is given to
thee.

The Queen of Beauty's but a captive maid
To Lord of Love, and on her bridal bed
She fills the musky glass with ruby wine;
And lo! to her in joy does he resign
His life,—for love, the heart is given to thee.

Ah, let me be a stranger in thy feast,
O soul of love, the lowliest and the least.
Thy fragrance fills with vision blinded eyes;—
Thy look is life,—the promised Paradise:
For love, sweet love, the heart is given to
thee.

I will not barter, for the crown of life,
This anguish of desire and heaving strife;
Nor buy the world with but a broken sigh,
That rises in my soul,—to dream and die;
For love, sweet love, my heart is given to
thee.

The veil of grief deepens the eyes of love;
And Death is guide to Paradise above;
Spread not thy net to catch the Nightingale;
And learn the secret of its rose-lipped tale;
For love, sweet love, her heart is given to thee.

The boat of life is wrecked amid the waves
Of mad desire: Ah, where is he who saves
The little remnants of a sinking board,
And stills the tempest with his mighty word?—
For love, sweet love, the heart is given to thee.

This withered garden will not bloom again;
And not a rose to listen to the strain
Of Bulbul's unrequited passion's there;
Alone she sings till death should end despair;—
For love, sweet love, her heart is given to thee.

I know not how my secret to conceal;
But like a child I utter what I feel;
And now 'tis joy, and now 'tis cry of pain:
What matters?—it will soon be joy again:
For love, sweet love, my heart is given to thee.

Alike is joy and pain to sages wise;
And hope, despair, an equal paradise
To love, when eyes are fair and hearts are true;
And silence sweet as music, to subdue
Thy soul, O love, for all is given to thee.

Not every Prince is crowned in History's
page;

Not every Alexander is a sage;
Nor is there Fount of Life in every spring
Nor in each glass the image of a King:

But love, sweet love, each heart is given to
thee.

An Emperor's daughter, but a maid forlorn!
To hunger of desire and sorrow born!
Of what avail is youth or sovereign pride,
When thou each moment dost our fate decide,
O Lord of love, for all is given to thee!

Behold a prisoner,—happy so to be;
Love-maddened slave,—O do not make her free;
Ah, when I die, upon my lonely grave
Let it be written,—“Love's unransomed
slave”—

For love, sweet love, my heart is given to
thee!

So Liela lived and died, and so Shireen;
And so Zuliekha, Egypt's anguished queen;
And so will Ynsif learn to love and sigh;
And like Farhad and Majnun droop and die;—
For love, sweet love, the heart is given to
thee.

Alone within this world of life am I!
Ah, who will hear the anguish of my cry,
Save thou, O Lord, the sovereign of my soul,
That guidest all to their unvisioned goal!—
O Lord of Love, my heart is given to thee!

NOTES

FIRDAUSI, the celebrated author of *Shahnama* or the "Book of Kings," an epic history of Persia, consisting of about 60,000 verses, was born in 940 A. D. He lived in the days of Sultan Mahmood of Ghazni, who promised to give him a piece of gold for every verse in the book. When, after thirty-five years of hard and patient work, the book was finished, the king, finding that it contained 60,000 verses, was induced by his courtiers to vary his promise and substitute silver for gold. Firdausi felt this as an insult, and distributed away the treasure among a slave, a bath-keeper, and a seller of wine. He then left Ghazni, and set out on his travels with a staff and a dervish's cloak; and wrote his celebrated *Satire*, one of the bitterest pieces in all literature. After some time the Sultan relented, and offered to pay the poet in full. But it was too late. Firdausi was now a broken old man, and died of sorrow and sickness in his native city of Tus in 1020 A. D. It is said that the Sultan sent the promised gold in the end; but as the camels, bearing the treasure, reached one of the gates of the city, the funeral of Firdausi passed out of another.

OMAR KHAYYAM was a great Persian poet, mathematician, astronomer and philosopher. He is best known by his *Rubai's* or Quatrains, about 500 in number. He died in 1123 A. D.

ANWARI was a distinguished poet, and is best known by his panegyrics and odes. He died in 1190 A. D.

KHAQANI was a great rival of Anwari, both as a panegyrist and a writer of odes. He died in 1199 A. D.

NIZAMI was a celebrated Persian poet, and is also known as Ganjavi, from Ganja, where he spent most of his life. He led a life of piety and meditation, and wrote a *Diwan* or a book of odes, and a number of poems, the most famous of which are *Khosrou and Shireen*, and *Liela and Majnun*. He died in 1203 A. D. at the age of sixty two.

FARID-UD-DIN ATTAR was a prolific writer, and led a strict, ascetic life. One of his most famous works is *Mantik-ut-tair* or the "Speech of Birds." It is an allegorical poem, intended to express the Sufi doctrine of the quest of the soul and its absorption into the divine. Attar was slain by the Moguls in 1230 A. D.

SA'DI is the greatest didactic poet of Persia, and was born about 1184 A. D. in Shiraz. He was a great traveller, and visited a number of countries in Asia and Africa. He came to India and saw the celebrated Hindu shrine of Somnath. His two most famous books are *Bostan* and *Gulistan*, the former in verse, and the latter in prose, interspersed with numerous verses and anecdotes. He also wrote a *Diwan* or a book of odes, and a number of other didactic verses and panegyrics. He died in 1292 A. D.

JALAL-UD-DIN RUMI is the greatest Sufi poet of Persia, and was born in 1207 A.D. at Balkh in Khorasan. He devoted himself to mystic philosophy, and led the life of a pious dervish, practising the sacred rites of Sufism, music and mystic dance,—expressive of the ascent of the soul

to God. He wrote some wonderful odes; and his famous *Masnavi* contains some of his deepest and most mystic speculations in verse. He died in 1273 A.D.

AMIR KHOSROU of Delhi is regarded as the greatest Indian poet who wrote in the Persian language. He wrote a *Diwan* or a book of odes, and a number of other poems. He was a friend of Sa'di and died in 1325 A. D.

HAFIZ is the most celebrated writer of pure lyrical poetry in Persian. He devoted himself to the study of poetry and mystic philosophy, and soon became famous as a great poet. His most celebrated work is his *Diwan* or book of odes, containing some of the sweetest strains of lyrical verse, clothed in the mystic garb and delicate imagery of Sufism. He was a native of Shiraz, and died in 1388 A.D.

JAMI, a great Persian poet and mystic, was born in 1414. He wrote a number of poems and a *Diwan*, and one of his famous works is *Yusif and Zuleikha*. He died in 1492 A. D.

URFI lived in the days of the Mogul Emperor Akbar, and is one of the most well-known Indian writers of Persian verse. He wrote a number of odes and panegyrics, and one of his most charming pieces is in praise of Kashmere, which he visited in company with the Emperor. He died in 1591 A. D.

ZEB-UN-NISSA was one of the daughters of the Mogul Emperor Aurangzebe, and is reputed to be the author of a *Diwan* or a book of odes. She died in 1702 A.D.